

**MINUTES OF POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION  
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 19, 2020**

*4:00 p.m.*

*Virtual Meeting via Webex*

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Stephanie Finn, Kimberly Cronk, Disa Wahlstrand, Selika Ducksworth-Lawton,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Daniel Kincaid

STAFF PRESENT: Police Chief Matt Rokus  
Deputy Fire Chief Jon Schultz  
Deputy Fire Chief Al Bertrang  
Human Resources Director Victoria Seltun

The Commission convened in open session at 4:00 p.m. Meeting was called to order by Vice President Stephanie Finn. Vice President Finn asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Police and Fire Commission meetings held on September 15<sup>th</sup>, September 17<sup>th</sup>, and October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020. No corrections or additions were noted, and the minutes stand approved as circulated.

Deputy Chief Jon Schultz provided a personnel update. There are currently 7 vacancies within the Fire Department. Interviews were held on November 18<sup>th</sup>. The Fire Department is currently moving forward with 7 candidates to PEP Hiring Surveys and Background Checks, which are being facilitated by the Human Resources Department.

Deputy Chief Schultz recommended Firefighter/Paramedic Kevin Blaine for promotion to Fire Engineer. Discussion was held. Commissioner Wahlstrand made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cronk, and passed unanimously, to approve the promotion of Firefighter/Paramedic Kevin Blaine to Fire Engineer, effective November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Deputy Chief Schultz provided an operational update. Chief Bell is sick with COVID-19 and currently quarantining. He has named Deputy Chief Schultz as acting Fire Chief in his absence. COVID-19 is taking its toll on the Fire Department with employees out as close contacts or with positive tests. Currently the Fire Department is seeing an uptick in their ambulance runs – about 5-15 more runs per day than normal. Commissioner Wahlstrand encouraged Fire Admin Staff to remind the crews to take care of themselves. The City's EAP provider has reached out to Fire staff to provide additional support as well.

Chief Rokus provided a personnel update. There have been 2 additional resignations since the last meeting. Both employees left in good standing to pursue other fields of employment. One resignation created a unique situation as the officer was one of the canine units. An agreement was reached between the employee and the department that all parties felt was in the best interest of the department and the canine. The department will look into replacing the canine unit in 2021 when they are closer to full staff levels. Currently the department has 10 vacancies for sworn positions. First round interviews have been completed with candidates from the current

eligibility list and 9 background checks have been initiated. Additional interviews will be held in December. Discussion was held in regards to the background check process and the potential for outsourcing to save staff time.

Chief Rokus provided an operational update. The department, much like the Fire Department, is feeling the effects of COVID-19 on their workforce in addition to the unprecedented number of vacancies. Staff is being called to fill staffing shortages by postings, holding staff past their scheduled shift, and calling staff in early. The department is working to create temporary policies to spread out overtime hours amongst staff. ECPD was recently involved in a criminal investigation into the Marshfield Police Chief. Marshfield city officials contacted ECPD in August and ECPD concluded their investigation recently. Chief Rokus discussed the role the police department played during the election in early November. Police Officers were present at each polling site as safety officers, in plain clothes, and were cross trained on election law. Discussion was held in regards to Commissioner Wahlstrand's inquiry into what the PFC can do to assist the Police Department.

Human Resources Director, Victoria Seltun, presented the draft of the public outreach and education document. Director Seltun noted that it had been reviewed by City Attorney Steve Nick and that she would like some additional help with wording to make it more understandable to citizens. After a brief discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Cronk and seconded by Commissioner Wahlstrand to table this topic until all Commissioners could be present. Motion passed unanimously.

At 4:27 p.m., motion was made by Commissioner Wahlstrand, seconded by Commissioner Cronk and passed by unanimous roll call vote to go into closed session to conduct the formal performance review of the Police Chief, Matt Rokus.

Deputy Chief Jon Schultz and Deputy Chief Al Bertrang left the meeting at 4:27 p.m.

Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton joined the meeting at 5:03 p.m.

Chief Rokus left the meeting at 5:32 p.m. Discussion was held on Commission feedback to include in Chief Rokus's evaluation feedback letter.

At 5:38 p.m., motion was made by Commissioner Ducksworth-Lawton, seconded by Commissioner Wahlstrand, and passed unanimously to move into open session.

Vice President Finn asked if there are any future agenda items. The draft of the public outreach and education document will be discussed at the next meeting.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wahlstrand to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Cronk, and the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

The next regularly-scheduled Police and Fire Commission meeting is January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

Minutes recorded by Kelly Shea, Police and Fire Commission Secretary.